



## **Senator Bill Stephens** **Senate District 27**



Senator Bill Stephens is a native of Fannin County in the North Georgia Mountains where his family has lived for four generations. He is the son of a welder and a teacher.

After setting school scoring records while graduating from one of the smallest high schools in the state, he received a scholarship to play basketball for Gainesville College in Gainesville, Georgia, where he was point guard for the Gainesville Lakers for two years.

He holds a Bachelors Degree in Business Administration from the University of Georgia and an MBA from Georgia State University.

He has five sons and he and his wife live in Canton where they are members of St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church in Woodstock. Some of you may recognize his wife, Shannon, as a weekend reporter and news anchor at WSB Television.

Bill served as Director of Communications and spokesperson for Governor Zell Miller from 1989 to 1991. He was first elected to the Georgia State Senate in 1998 in an election for an open seat against two other Republicans and one Democrat. He went right to work in the Senate. In his freshman term he took on the status quo by creating the "Georgia Stuck Pig Award," given annually to highlight wasteful government spending. He also earned former Governor Roy Barnes' designation as "number 56 of 56" in the Senate on the Barnes loyalty scale.

At the beginning of his second term, his colleagues elected him Chairman of the Senate Republican Caucus. From that post, he and a small group of Senators, including then Senator Sonny Perdue, laid out a strategy and campaign that in part was responsible for the historic results of the 2002 elections and the present GOP Majority in the Georgia State Senate.

On the Friday following the November 2002 elections, then Governor-Elect Perdue named him Senate Administration Floor Leader. Bill also served on Governor Perdue's

Transition Team, even acting as spokesperson for the Transition for a number of weeks. As Administration Floor Leader, Senator Stephens, along with Senator Dan Lee of Lagrange, was responsible for successfully guiding Governor Perdue's legislative package through the Senate during the 2002 legislative session.

His colleagues elected him as Senate Majority Leader in a 2003 special election to succeed Senator Tom Price, who successfully won his bid for Johnny Isakson's Congressional seat. Earning an even deeper respect from his colleagues, Bill successfully managed his increased legislative responsibilities and was re-elected to a second term as Majority Leader for the 2005 Legislative Session.

As Senate Majority Leader, Bill was responsible for Caucus fundraising, issues development, messaging, recruiting, and all other responsibilities that go with maintaining a GOP majority in the Senate. In addition to all of this, he was charged with managing the day-to-day Senate operations in partnership with Senate President Pro Tempore Eric Johnson of Savannah.

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